

# SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 778

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 17, 2019

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 778

This bill establishes in, but not of, the Department of State, a Campus Sexual Assault Commission. The commission is to consist of 12 members, including:

(1) the Secretary of Higher Education, the Attorney General, and the Director of the Division on Women in the Department of Children and Families, or their designees, who will serve ex officio;

(2) five public members to be appointed by the Governor, including a representative of the State colleges and universities, a representative of the public research universities, a representative of the county colleges, a representative of the independent colleges and universities, and a representative of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault; and

(3) four public members with demonstrated expertise or interest in issues related to the work of the commission, including at least one individual who is a campus sexual assault survivor. The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly will each appoint one of these public members. Public members will serve for a term of three years.

The bill provides that it will be the responsibility of the commission to further the work of the Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault established pursuant to P.L.2015, c.165. In particular, the commission is required to:

- study and evaluate emerging issues, policies, and practices concerning campus sexual assault;
- monitor the response to, and implementation of, the recommendations put forth in the report issued by the task force;
- supplement the findings and recommendations, as necessary, of the report issued by the task force;
- develop and administer, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education, a campus climate survey every three years; and
- develop an action plan every three years that includes policies, programs, or procedures responsive to the issues and needs identified in the campus climate survey.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) notes that the bill may lead to an indeterminate increase in State expenditures. The bill specifies that the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) will provide stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants as the Campus Sexual Assault Commission will require to carry out its work. However, it is not known if the OSHE has a sufficient number of current employees who can perform those functions, or if the OSHE would need to hire additional staff to support the work of the commission.

The OLS notes that the Campus Sexual Assault Commission is a permanent commission. Pursuant to the bill, the commission is to develop and administer, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education, a campus climate survey and develop an action plan every three years. There may be ongoing costs associated with the commission conducting the survey, developing the action plan, and implementing its other responsibilities under the bill.